

Park Purpose Statement

- **Bryce Canyon National Park is set aside to conserve, preserve, and protect its natural and cultural resources, outstanding scenic features, and areas of unusual scenic beauty and scientific interest and importance as a public park for the year-round enjoyment and use of present and future generations.**

Park Significance Statements

Statements of significance clearly define the most important things about the park's resources and values. They serve as a foundation for developing primary themes and desirable visitor experiences.

- Bryce Canyon National Park is best known for its hoodoos—erosional features carved from the edge of the Paunsaugunt Plateau in southern Utah. Here, routine events such as freeze-thaw cycles, water run-off, and mineral oxidation combine in unique ways to continuously create and destroy oddly shaped and multi-hued fins, spires, grottoes, and windows from the limestones of the Claron Formation.
- The park's location at the top of the Grand Staircase and the clarity of the air provide visitors the opportunity to regularly experience panoramic vistas extending over 100 miles. The absence of human development and artificial lights creates conditions for unimpeded distant views by day and unparalleled viewing of the brilliant night skies.
- The park and other nearby public lands provide opportunities for visitors from around the world to experience wilderness values such as clean air, peaceful settings, natural soundscapes, solitude, and self-reflection.
- Bryce Canyon National Park provides important protected habitat for natural life and its processes.
- The cultural history of Bryce Canyon and the surrounding area documents the changing human relationships with the land.

Interpretive Theme Statements

Interpretive theme statements convey park significance. Primary parkwide interpretive themes are the key ideas through which the park's nationally significant resource values are conveyed to the public. They connect park resources to the larger ideas, meanings, and values of which they are a part. They are the core component on which the interpretive program is based. Each primary theme will connect to a number of specific stories, or subthemes. These elements are helpful in designing individual services, ensuring that the main aspects of the primary themes are addressed.

- The brilliant red limestone formations at Bryce Canyon form the top step of the Grand Staircase. This unique geologic feature descends from Bryce Canyon to the Grand Canyon, and spans more than 200 million years of geologic history,

giving us the ability to view and contemplate what geologic processes can do over eons.

- Water and the power of erosion create the wondrous geologic formations preserved in the park, a testament to the power of nature to mold and alter our physical environment.
- Bryce Canyon is small in acreage but offers one of the world's most expansive vistas of untrammelled wilderness. Sparsely populated, this "vast vacantness" provides an outstanding opportunity for visitors from around the world to experience wilderness values such as solitude, clean air, unobscured night sky viewing, natural sounds and smells, and self-reflection.
- Bryce Canyon provides important protected lands, ranging through several life zones, where scientific methods and research are being used to restore natural processes after decades of human influence.
- The area's rich cultural history documents changing connections with the land, illustrating an ongoing struggle to balance resource uses and their ecological and societal consequences.
- The first generation of National Park Service leaders and pioneer conservationists worked tirelessly to connect Americans with their national parks, both physically, through transportation and accommodations, and mentally, through emotional and intellectual connections to the resources. Bryce Canyon's historic districts and cultural resources open a physical window into this foundational era.